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From Print to Electronic: The UC Merced Experience

by **Jim Dooley** (Head, Collection Services, University of California, Merced) P.O. Box 2039, Merced, CA 95344; Phone: 209-658-7161; Fax: 209-228-4271 <jdooley@ucmerced.edu>

UC Merced opened on September 5, 2005 as the tenth campus in the **University of California** system and the first American research university of the 21st century. Collection development planning began in earnest in 2003 when the shift from print to electronic was already well underway in several areas. Although the goal was never to be an “all-electronic” library, and the library certainly is not one today, the **UC Merced Library** has found itself moving more and more in that direction.

When UC Merced librarians began collection planning, we were immediately faced with the fundamental question of what a 21st century research library collection should be. Part of the answer was supplied in that UC Merced is a campus of the **University of California**. This meant that students and faculty had access to the thirty-four million volumes in the collections of the **UC Libraries**. Therefore, the library did not have to retrospectively collect print, either monographs or journals, but could rely on UC interlibrary loan to meet the vast majority of user needs for older materials. This also meant that the library would not rely on volume count as a measure of success in meeting patron needs. In turn this allowed the library to focus on building a local collection to support the research and instructional needs of UC Merced faculty and students.

In 2003 the librarians believed that the shift from print to electronic in journals was so well advanced that the library could safely afford to have no print subscriptions. Building a local journal collection in this context meant paying UC Merced's share of the cost for the journals licensed by the **California Digital Library** on behalf of the **UC Libraries**. The only exception would be those journals requested by faculty that were not available online. While there were significant outstanding issues with the shift to online journals, such as publisher business models, licensing, perpetual access to licensed content and archiving, UC Merced librarians expected that these issues could and would be addressed. While these issues are by no means solved, we believe that our initial optimism was justified. They are certainly being vigorously addressed by the **UC Libraries** as a whole and by many others. Currently the **UC Merced Library** provides access to over 15,000 online journals. The library has about ten subscriptions to print journals not available online. In those cases where the publisher requires the library to subscribe to print in order to get online access, the print is neither shelved nor cataloged.

Another area in which the UC Merced librarians believed the shift to electronic access was well underway was government information. Given the stated intent of **GPO** to move

to exclusively electronic publication, we felt that the library could meet patron needs for government information by subscribing to the **Marcive Documents Without Shelves** service. This service provides the library with a catalog record containing a URL/PURL for every federal government publication available online. Ironically, this service enabled UC Merced to become the first all-electronic **Federal Depository Library** in 2006.

One important area in which UC Merced Library staff believed a shift from electronic to print was not well underway was eBooks. We did not believe that the market was sufficiently mature in 2003 to allow us to rely on electronic as the preferred format for monographs. It's been interesting to see how the market has evolved in the last four years in response to the increased user acceptance of eBooks. It is now possible to envision a scenario in which user preference for online monographs, particularly in science, technology and medicine (STM), and business, will be as strong as user preference for online journals is today.

In 2003 the library identified several significant barriers to the adoption of eBooks. Hardware and software standards and protocols were in the early stages of development, with many vendors employing proprietary systems. There was the widespread belief that a standard portable reader was necessary for users to embrace eBooks. While several competing devices were available, the market had not produced a clear winner. At the same time, publishers and aggregators were also employing different formats, such as ASCII, PDF, HTML and XML that seriously hampered interoperability. Digital Rights Management Systems could be used to severely limit access, use, copying and printing. Such systems could also be used to prevent a library from utilizing its “first sale” rights to lend electronic titles to other libraries.

MARC records were often unavailable, thus significantly limiting access. The lack of MARC records also had serious implications for technical services workflows and tended to relegate eBooks to the status of projects. It was often unclear how publishers would fulfill their promises of perpetual access to purchased titles. Business and licensing models were in the early stages of development. In many cases publishers insisted on overly restrictive license terms that severely impacted the usability of eBook collections. Also, each provider tended to have

only one method for acquiring eBooks, either subscription or single-purchase, which made acquisitions more difficult.

For all of these reasons, UC Merced did what most other new libraries have done — plan for stack space in the building and work with a book vendor (**YBP**) to acquire a print monograph collection. The library opened in 2005 with approximately 32,000 volumes, both purchases and gifts, in a library building with space for 250,000 volumes. Approximately 13,000 print volumes are added per year, chiefly through an approval plan with **YBP**.

While UC Merced librarians were not ready to abandon print monographs, we were certainly aware that the library needed to respond to increased user preference for

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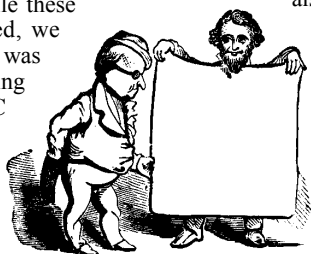
eBooks, particularly in science and technology. As platforms and business terms evolved, this response necessitated experimentation with a variety of eBook packages and providers. The fact that both the library and the university were brand new fostered a willingness to experiment in many areas. With regard to eBooks, if a particular eBook initiative didn't work out, the bibliographic records could simply be removed from the catalog and the library could move on.

What follows is a chronological account of our experiences with eBooks up to this point. While at first glance it may appear that the library wandered aimlessly among providers, the author does not believe that this is the case. Rather, the library's initiatives can be viewed as a response to both the changing eBook marketplace over the past four years as well as to growing acceptance of eBooks. If a new provider offered better access terms or a more user-friendly interface, the library didn't hesitate to work with them.

UC Merced's first eBook collection was a subscription to the **History E-Book Collection**, now the **Humanities E-Book Collection**, from the **American Council of Learned Societies**. This was attractive because the cost was reasonable, MARC records were available and the subject focus complimented our book purchasing. The fact that this collection came from a society rather than a commercial publisher also made it attractive.

The first foray into the world of commercial eBooks was a subscription to **ebrary**. This gave UC Merced a very large collection at an extremely low cost per title and allowed the library at the time to practically double the size

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of its total monograph collection. Essentially the library was subscribing to a database of books that allowed for unlimited simultaneous users. MARC records were available and the suite of software tools (**InfoTools**) proved popular with patrons. Note that both of these collections are subscriptions; **UC Merced** does not have perpetual access to the content nor can the library select the content. It is also true that the content may not necessarily be the latest since publishers are understandably reluctant to make their current titles available at such a low price. Some may see these as disadvantages, but for **UC Merced** access to a large body of content at a very low cost per title outweighs any such disadvantage.

At about the same time as the **ebrary** subscription was initiated, the library made a purchase of eBooks from **NetLibrary**. This worked very differently in that the author worked with a librarian at **NetLibrary** to select the titles and the library owns them in perpetuity. The titles selected were across all disciplines and complemented our approval plan purchases. The library hasn't pursued additional **NetLibrary** purchases because all the librarians at **UC Merced** are unhappy with the one user at a time access model. If **NetLibrary** would move to a multiple user access model, the library would most likely make additional purchases, especially since **NetLibrary** titles can be ordered through **GOBI**, the **YBP** ordering system.

In 2004 after attending a program on new eBook access models at **ALA Midwinter**, the author decided to implement patron-initiated or "patron driven" purchasing of eBooks with **Ebook Library (EBL)**. Bibliographic records for the entire **EBL** collection have been loaded into our catalog; essentially functioning as order records. When a title is accessed beyond a ten minute period a specific number of times, it's purchased. One barrier to use is that **EBL** is the library's only electronic resource provider that requires a separate log-in to access the content. All other authentication is solely by IP range. Although the purchase of eBooks through **EBL** began very slowly, perhaps because of the separate log-in requirement, it has markedly increased in the last several months.

The **UC Merced Library** does not have a reference collection; any reference books are shelved in the general stacks and available for check-out. In order to provide access to dictionaries and encyclopedias, the library subscribes to **Xrefer**.

Coutts/MyiLibrary is the last major eBook vendor the library has worked with. At first, science titles from a limited number of publishers were purchased through **MyiLibrary**. When **MyiLibrary** became the platform for eBooks supplied by **Coutts**, the library transitioned to a **Coutts** science eBook approval plan.

In addition to these locally-licensed eBooks, the **UC Merced Library** also provides access to several vendor eBook packages licensed

against the grain people profile

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BORN & LIVED: Born, Worcester, MA; lived principally in Riverside, CA, American Fork, UT and now Merced, CA.

EARLY LIFE: Lived in Worcester, MA until graduated from college.

FAMILY: Wife, **Paula Demanett**; son, **Patrick**.

EDUCATION: B.A., English, **College of the Holy Cross**; M.A., Drama, **University of Washington**; M.F.A. Theatre, **University of Massachusetts**; M.L.I.S., **Brigham Young University**.

FIRST JOB: Assistant Professor, Theatre, **Rollins College**, Winter Park, FL.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Prior to becoming a librarian taught lighting design and technical direction for theatre and dance, principally at the **University of California**, Riverside. Held various positions in acquisitions, cataloging and special collections in the **J. Willard Marriott Library** at the **University of Utah**. Currently head of collection development and technical services at the **University of California, Merced**. Served on various **ALA** committees and currently on the **ALCTS Program Committee**. Presented at **ALA Annual** in 2005 on collection development at **UC Merced**.

SPARE TIME ACTIVITIES: Model railroading.

MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Being one of the founding librarians at **UC Merced**.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: Help increase the level of collaboration among the **UC** libraries.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Increasing amounts of information will only be available digitally. Increasing numbers of users will only access information online, whether or not the information is also available in print. The copyright issues surrounding the **Google** mass digitization project will be resolved one way or another. Depending on how the issues are resolved, mass digitization could have a significant impact on collection development. In general, if they want to remain relevant, libraries and publishers will have to collaborate even more to provide information to users where and how they want it. This means libraries will have to develop discovery systems at least as powerful and user-friendly as **Amazon** and **Google**. This also means that publishers will have to modify some of their approaches to intellectual property and licensing to facilitate access and use of information. 🐾

through the **California Digital Library**, chiefly **CRC** handbooks, **Knovel** eBooks, some **Springer** series, and **O'Reilly** computer books through **Safari**. The latter is explicitly in lieu of purchasing print computer books.

At this point in 2007 there are 393,000 bibliographic records in the **UC Merced** catalog. 53,700 are for physical items, 52,700 books and 1,000 DVDs, and the remaining 340,000 are for electronic items. Of these, 44,700 are for eBooks and the remainder for other electronic resources such as serials, government documents, databases, large analytic sets such as **EEBO** and the **EBL** "order records" mentioned above. Therefore, eBooks are equal to 83 % of the **UC Merced** library's print holdings and print holdings are 13% of the library's total holdings.

After four years, it may be instructive to examine the list of barriers to eBook adoption given above to see what has changed.

- The platforms for viewing and using eBooks have become more sophisticated and allow activities such as cutting and pasting, advanced search capabilities, linking of text, browsability, marking and highlighting text, citation tools, bookmarking, and interactivity with sources such as dictionaries and media. The development of portable readers has lagged developments in software, but people are using eBooks on desktops, laptops and other devices.
- MARC records are much more available as most publishers have understood the importance of the library catalog as a discovery tool. The availability of MARC records has also allowed the acquisitions and cataloging of eBooks to be integrated into normal technical services workflows. At **UC Merced** the library

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receives all print books, both approvals and firm orders, completely shelf-ready from **YBP**. The library receives files of bibliographic records for print books from **YBP** and files of bibliographic records for eBooks from various vendors. These include monthly updates from ebrary, records from **Coutts** for purchased titles and records from **OCLC** for patron-purchased **EBL** titles. In addition, the library receives weekly files of records from the **UC Shared Cataloging Program** for electronic resources licensed by the **California Digital Library**. These include records for databases, electronic journals and eBooks. All records go to the library's authority control vendor and are then loaded into the local catalog. Files are extracted weekly from the local catalog and uploaded to **Melvyl**, the **University of California** union catalog. One person in technical services handles all record import and export regardless of source or format.

- Integration of eBooks into the systems of print vendors has greatly improved. **NetLibrary** titles have been available through **YBP** for some time. Recently **YBP** has announced agreements with both **EBL** and **ebrary** to make their titles available through **GOBI** as well. It is also possible to order individual eBooks through the **Coutts** online system, **OASIS**.
- Many publishers, though certainly not all, have begun to offer more realistic licensing terms that recognize scholarly sharing and permit at least limited downloading, emailing and printing.
- Acquisition models are evolving with ebrary offering both a subscription model and a single-purchase model for acquiring eBooks. Access models are also evolving. While some providers cling to a single user at a time model, others such as **EBL** with their non-linear lending model and **ebrary** and **Coutts** with single and multi-user purchase options have moved beyond the older model. However, a library is still required to choose between a subscription that allows for unlimited simultaneous users but no perpetual access to the content and a purchase that limits simultaneous users but provides for perpetual access to the content.

While the landscape has changed for the better in many ways since 2003, in one significant respect it has not. Publishers are still refusing to allow interlibrary loan of eBooks.

At **UC Merced** we have begun to investigate whether all of our science, engineering and business monographs should be electronic. Faculty and students clearly prefer journals in electronic format; the library literally could not give away print copies of biomedical journals that had to be taken in order to acquire online access. Users in these disciplines are usually

not reading a book from cover to cover, but rather are interested in discrete segments, thus lessening the problems associated with reading large amounts of text from a monitor. The thinking of the librarians has also been influenced by the increasing number of announcements of the building of all-electronic, or as **Stanford** says "bookless" engineering and business libraries. Library staff has begun to schedule focus groups to test this hypothesis.

Even if science and engineering faculty and student preferences are overwhelmingly in favor of eBooks, however, the ILL issue would still be a barrier. In a few years the library could be faced with a situation in which most if not all of the science and engineering collection could not be loaned to other libraries. The solution is not to expect libraries to purchase duplicate print and electronic copies in order to permit interlibrary loan. Rather, libraries should work for licensing that recognizes the purchase of electronic titles as "first sale" to allow interlibrary loan and for business models that recognize fair use.

So far this discussion has been limited to local initiatives at **UC Merced**. At the same time, the **UC Libraries** are beginning to investigate system-wide consortial licensing of eBooks. The **UC Collection Development Committee** has recently charged a task force, of which the author is chair, to "develop a set of guiding principles for collecting books in electronic format, in the broader context of system-wide monographic collection devel-

opment, shared print goals, mass digitization projects and preservation."

This paper began with the statement that **UC Merced** librarians did not start out intending to create an all-electronic library. From the composition of the library's current holdings it appears that it is headed strongly in that direction, at least in science and technology. The author expects that the **UC Merced Library** will be collecting in print in the humanities and some of the social sciences for some time. The rationale for this prediction comes principally from the information-seeking behaviors of persons in various disciplines. The shift from print to electronic, particularly with regard to journals, has been fastest and most complete in science, technology, medicine and business. Faculty in these fields has been highly receptive to the use of eBooks. On the other hand, in literature and history **UC Merced** faculty continue to express strong preferences for print, even to the extent of requesting print titles that duplicate existing eBooks. This preference appears to be independent of the age or experience of the individual faculty members.

The speed at which our monographic collections become digital will be primarily governed, not by user desires or expectations, but by the willingness of publishers to view eBooks as other than adjuncts or threats to their print revenues. For the benefit of all library users, the author hopes that the progress that has been made toward meeting user needs will continue. 🐾

Moving From Good Effort to Best Practice — Refining a Weeding Process in a Dental School Library

by **Barbara A. Gushrowski, MLS** (Access and Instructional Services Librarian, Indiana University School of Dentistry Library; Phone: 317-274-5204; Fax: 317-278-1256) <bgushrow@iupui.edu>

In the autumn of 2005, the staff at the **Indiana University School of Dentistry Library (IUSDL)** commenced a major weeding project of the circulating collection. Since weeding was previously not performed vigorously or with any regularity, the library had reached critical mass in the stacks shelving. The shelves were filled to capacity, including the topmost shelf of each unit, and a major initiative to analyze the collection and weed out the unused and aged items began.

Through fits and starts this project has proceeded for 18 months, and, though progress has been slow, we are seeing good results. We began with lofty goals, unrealistic timetables, and a labor intensive process. As the project proceeded, our goals changed to become actually attainable, timetables are now very flexible, and our process has been refined so that more time is spent making decisions

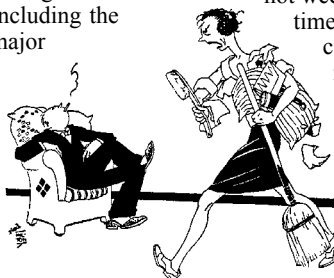
than on gathering data.

Most librarians can list the standard reasons for weeding a collection; to save space, save staff time in re-shelving, increase patron satisfaction, etc. And all librarians can provide justification for why their collection is not weeded regularly; not enough

time, not enough staff, no process in place, the need to report growth in the collections each year, etc.

While the author makes no claim that what follows will solve all of the above-mentioned problems, this article does present details of a process that, through refinement, works well

in the **IUSDL**, an explanation of the work flow, and the story of how a "Good Effort" became a "Best Practice."



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